The *Monitor* had acquitted herself with great credit; but the trial could hardly be considered a decisive one. The Navy Department recognized this fully, for vessels of all kinds were sent to Hampton Roads to render what assistance they could in meeting the formidable Confederate warship. A feeling of comparative security was at last reached; but there was yet great room for legitimate doubt as to the possible future of the *Merrimac*. *It* was conceded that the James River was closed to Federal vessels; but it was believed that the *Merrimac* could be prevented from destroying the shipping in the Roads, and from going up York River. Any attempt on her part to effect these objects would be resisted by a force which, in the opinion of the United States naval authorities, would be more than she could meet. Such was the situation at Fortress Monroe a few dayn after the famous battle between the *Motifor* and the *MtirriwiOG*.

Let UH return now to General McClellan. The evacuation of the Confederate batteries on the lower Potomac rendered the President's order of March 8th no longer applicable to the circumstances. McClellan called a council-of-war consisting of his four corpH~couiruanders, McDowell, Sumner, Heinteelman, and Keyes. lie laid informally his plans before

them. They met on the 13th, and decided that, in view of the enemy's having retired from Manassas behind the Rapidan, operations could best be undertaken from Old Point Comfort, or Fort Monroe, provided

1st, " that the *Merrimac* " could " be neutralized ";